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The Climbing Magazine

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All Girl's Trip to
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Ontario's Unlikely 5.14
Climber: Mark Smith

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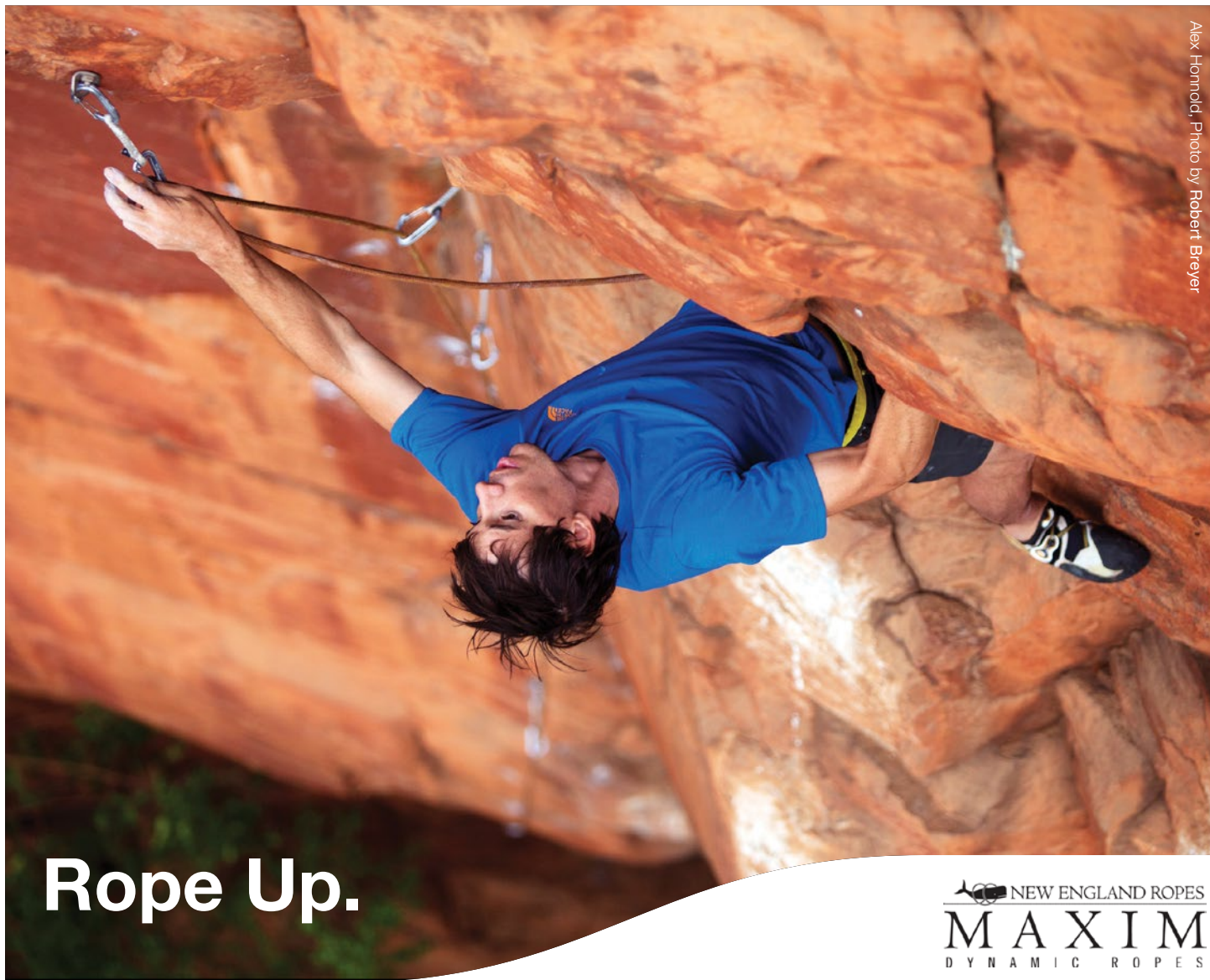
*A shoo-in for the most impressive trip to Bishop in recent history. Alex Megos puts another one in the bag and moves on. California. **KEN ETZEL***

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Alex Honnold, Photo by Robert Breyer

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February/March 2015

Olivia Hsu at Tijuana, Santanyi, Mallorca

Photo Caroline Treadway

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Finding Success in Failure by Josh Muller

Cover: Daila Ojeda on Espolon 6c (5.11a), Santanyi Photo Caroline Treadway

Soloing

Soloing is one of the oldest styles of climbing, as old as mountaineering. Despite its history, there's mystery about it. Why do it? How do the best handle it? Is it luck or skill? There have been great solos by those who don't solo often and there have been tragedies involving known soloists. The death of the experienced climber Paul Preuss in 1913 after he fell trying to solo the first ascent of the north ridge of Mandlkogel, rocked the climbing world.

Fast forward to 1980, when Yosemite climber Tobin Sorenson died from a fall attempting Mount Alberta's North Face. Two years later, John Lauchlan died trying to make the first solo ascent of Polar Circus. In 1987, Jimmy Jewell fell off Poor Man's Peuterey in North Wales. He was using the route as a shortcut from a pub to a hut. In 1993, Derek Hersey died while soloing the Steck-Salathé in Yosemite. Michael Reardon went missing while soloing sea cliffs in the U.K. In July 2009, John Bachar died falling off Dike Wall in California. Five months later, famed ice soloist Guy Lacelle died soloing an easy ice climb after an avalanche swept him off. In 2011, Akihira Tawara fell off Directissima on Yamnуска. All of these climbers could be considered experts.

In Canada, people have been soloing for a century. In 1929, Roger Neve soloed the Kain Route on Mount Louis and down-climbed it. Then there was Royal Robbins's 1967 solo of Edith Cavell's North Face, Alex Lowe's solo first-ascent of Asteroid

Alley, Greg Cameron's 1979 first free ascent of Squamish's Pipeline, Geoff Powter's solo of CMC Wall on Yamnуска, Peter Croft's Bugaboo solos, Tim Pochay's 1989 solo of the Greenwood/Locke on Mount Temple, Chris Brazeau's fast solos of the Grand Central Couloir and Mount Temple's Greenwood/Jones, Ian Welsted's solo of Robson's Emperor Ridge, Cian Brinker's solo of Mount Temple's Sphinx Face, Will Stanhope's solos of Zombie Roof and Sentry Box, Alex Honnold's solo of University Wall in 2014 and Marc-Andre Leclerc's numerous solos. The list goes on and on.

I knew Tawara, the man who fell off Directissima on Yamnуска. I spoke with him the night before he left, we had a beer. He was convinced he could do it. The route was only 5.8 and he climbed 5.12. The day after he didn't return, Sharon Wood and her partner discovered his body at the base of the climb. What happened? Chances are a hold broke and he fell off. When I lived in Squamish, I would go to the Smoke Bluffs every night and do my solo circuit. Once, on my fourth climb, I almost slipped off. I down-climbed and went to the pub. The next day, I returned and climbed the route with a rope.

Everyone needs to find his or her own limits for risk. Make smart decisions this year and be safe. In the words of Bill Allen, "It's better to be a live coward than a dead hero."

Brandon Pullan

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Bill Morse suits up for a larger than life burn on "California 5.12", a steep and thuggy 12c at Red Rock Canyon, Nevada Photo: Ben Moon

Mountain Hardwear

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The day-sized Scrambler is fully waterproof thanks to an OutDry laminate throughout the main pack body and a waterproof, seam-taped top pocket. Dual ice axe loops and two gear loops keep things organized, while a HardWave frame sheet keeps the pack rigid, but light.



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The Thetis' Polartec Power Dry fabric excels at moving moisture, and functions superbly as a base or mid layer. An extra-long hem and incredibly long sleeves ensure no cold spots, while the deep zipper dumps any extra heat.

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Competitions

The Kranj World Cup

The 2014 IFSC World Cup season wrapped up Nov. 15–16 in Kranj, Slovenia. Home country favourite Mina Markovic took gold before her home crowd and we crowned this season's overall medallists in Lead. For the men, Adam Ondra won the comp and Sean McColl placed second. For the year's combined events, McColl finished on top and Ondra in second. For the women, Akiyo Noguchi took the overall title.

Stage One Bouldering Nationals

The first stage of the national bouldering open series took place at Quebec's Horizon Roc in mid-December. Finishing in the top three for women were Marieta Akalski, Beth Vince and Ashley Veevers in third. For the men, Sebastien Lazure beat the competition and in second was B.C.'s Matt Keays and in third was Francis Bilodeau.

Tour de Bloc

The first half of the Tour de Bloc's 12th season have taken place and the competitions have been fierce. In the Eastern Division, Sebastien Lazure looks to be the strongest with two wins in four comps, but he has young guns Lucas Uchida, Zach Richardson as well as Come Schnebelin and Julien Bourassa-Moreau to contend with for the second half of the season. On the women's side, Veronique Gosselin has two wins out of four appearances, but former National Champion Kerry Briggs also managed to win at her home gym, True North, with young up and coming talents Pia Graham and Beth Vince close behind. In the west division, Jason Holowach of Saskatoon has been the standout performer on the men's side, with two wins in three comps. However he was bested by Simon Parton, one of the top competition climbers and setters in the country, at the Hive in Vancouver. On the women's side, it is a battle between Stacey Weldon and Alyssa Weber, each with a win in Alberta, with Becca Frangos and Eva Thompson just a half step behind. While Shannon Russell took the crown at the lone B.C. stop at the Hive. The remaining stops of the tour will be at Ontario's Coyote Rock gym, Grand River Rocks, Joe Rockhead's, and Grip it.



Pan Am Games

Team Canada had a great showing at the 2014 IFSC Youth Pan Am Championship, which took place in Mexico City on Nov. 26 to 30, with a number of standout performances from one of the deepest talent youth teams in recent memory. Robert Stewart-Patterson took the gold medal for junior boys in speed, posting a time of 4.28 in his final round on the 10-metre wall. Elan Jonas-McRae won the gold medal in difficulty for junior boys. Lucas Uchida took home the gold medal in bouldering. Alyssa Webber netted an excellent 90th in difficulty in her category. Catherine Carkner won a bronze medal in bouldering for Youth B Girls, showing excellent promise. Zach Richardson made the most of his debut, landing not one, but two podiums.

First UIAA World Cup

The first UIAA ice climbing world tour stopped at Bozeman, Mont. Climbers from around the world showed up to go head to head. Nearly a dozen Canadians made the trip south for the unseasonably warm temps. Two Canadians made finals, Gord McArthur and Sarah Hueniken. McArthur finished fourth and won the North American Championships for men and Sarah Hueniken finished eighth and won the North American Championships for women. Other notable Canadian finishes were Jen Olson who finished ninth in semis and Nathan Kutcher who finished 11th in semis.

Fourth Free Ascent of The Nose

Jorg Verhoeven has made the fourth free ascent of El Cap's The Nose. After three days, he sent the iconic route after sending the Great Roof on his first burn of the attempt. Verhoeven wrote on his Facebook page: "Yeah, I freeclimbed The Nose! In three days, I managed to grab the fourth ascent of this iconic route. I sent the Great Roof first burn on day two and the Changing Corners after two falls the next morning." The only other free ascents were by Lynn Hill in 1994 and Tommy Caldwell and Beth Rodden in 2005.

Stanhope Frees El Cap in a Day

During early November, dozens of climbers headed to Yosemite. Will Stanhope and Jesse Huey had been attempting to link El Cap and Half Dome, all free in a day. Early in the morning, they started up Freerider 5.12d 37 pitches. The route is a 5.12 variation to the Salathe Wall pioneered by the Alex Huber in 1998. Although they didn't climb Half Dome, Jesse Huey recalled, "It was great being there to see Will free El Cap in a day in such an awesome style."

Ouellet's New Desert Cracks

Jean-Pierre (Pee-Wee) Ouellet sent a number of projects while visiting Indian Creek in the fall. Ouellet climbed a half-dozen 5.13s, including two first ascents, Zebras and Moonbeams, and Green Belly. He also repeated Trail of Tears 5.13b, his 50th 5.13 crack. Ouellet said, "I sent today on my last day of the trip. Freezing temps and it actually started snowing while I was going over the last crux."

Leclerc Visits the Rockies

Marc-Andre Leclerc started his winter with a road trip to the Rockies. Between -40 C nights in the van, he climbed some classic routes. First, he headed out with Jon Walsh to Storm Creek and climbed a new route, The Plum WI6 M7 120 metres. Then he soloed the steep Rundle Mountain route, Sacre Bleu WI5+ 120 metres. He then roped up with Joshua Lavigne and Walsh to climb a new route on Cirrus Mountain, Magic Bullet M7 110 metres. Next, Leclerc and Lavigne made a rare ascent of The Wild Thing M7 1,200 metres in a single push. Before heading back to the coast, Leclerc soloed Polar Circus WI5 500 metres and Weeping Wall WI5 120 metres.

Opposite Top:
Lucas Uchida took gold at the 2014 IFSC Youth Pan Am Championship, Mexico City

Left: Gord McArthur at the 2014 UIAA World Cup, Bozeman, Mont.

Opposite Bottom:
Karine Gervais at the Tour de Bloc at the Bloc Shop, Montreal on Nov. 22.



Photo: Diego Patete



Jay Mills' New Routes

Jay Mills and Kris Irwin took advantage of good early season conditions to climb the new Warm Wet Comfort M5 60 metres above Emerald Lake. Jay Mills teamed up with Steve Holeczi and Eammon Walsh to climb the new Big Ears Teddy WI4R M4X 300 metres and with Rob Owens to climb the new Space Goat WI5+X M5 320 metres on Capricorn Peak. Mills then climbed a new variation to the always popular Coire Dubh, adding Soft Coire to the upper headwall.

Above: **Raphael Slawinski and Jen Olson** on the fourth ascent of Nophobia

Slawinski and Olson Repeat Nophobia

Raphael Slawinski and Jen Olson made the fourth ascent of Nophobia M10+ on Dec. 22, 2014. Both climbers sent every pitch, making them the fourth and fifth redpoints of the steep route. According to Olson, the ice on the last pitch was almost non-existent and Slawinski led the stout pitch with little pro. It is one of the biggest and hardest mixed routes in Canada.

New Quebec Mixed Route

St.-Alban is an all bolted dry-tooling crag near Quebec City. Last year, Kutcher spent three days there and onsighted three M10s, the hardest of over 60 dry-tool routes. He returned this fall and established the hardest route at the crag. Kutcher said, "I bolted it and climbed it a few weekends ago. It crosses and clips a few existing routes and bolts. Mostly all new climbing/moves except for the very end. Only shares a couple holds in the middle, but climbs a different line to and from the holds. The start is all new. No drilled holds." The route is called First Blood M11.

New Route on Icefield Parkway

Anna Smith and Jim Elzinga made two attempts to climb their new five-pitch route, The Proposal WI4 M6. "Anna led the crux, a steep rock over-hang on the second-pitch right off the belay with real snotty pro. It was hard with big commitment and consequence. It's Anna's first new route in the Rockies. The more we suffered, the bigger Anna's smile," said Elzinga.

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Weighing the Options

Anorexia and competitive climbing

Story by **Sarah Spurell**

When Canadian Sean McColl reposted French climber Charlotte Durif's article on anorexia in competitive climbing, my coach texted me. I was sitting in my clinic waiting for the receptionist to call my number for bloodwork and I had this feeling of hope that someone was going to throw this dark monster I struggled with into the light. I expected the author to dust some of the stigma off this serious illness.

What I read felt more like a slap in the face. Durif said, "Yes, I'm calling it a method of doping. Despite not requiring a chemical product, it is an artificial physical alteration process, just as blood doping, to cite just one example in other sports." According to Durif, "These anorexics are not sick, they choose it mindfully, convinced of their legitimate and free will."

While I could not agree more that anorexia in competitive climbing is a real issue and deserves the attention of those who love the sport, this is not the right kind of attention. This article perpetuates stigma in a million and four ways, but I don't think this is the author's fault. I know first-hand that anorexia is hard to talk about and in general is not well understood. I'm here now to

do what I can for myself and for anyone else who's suffering.

First and foremost: anorexia is not a choice. It runs in families. Many women who develop anorexia experience the onset of an anxiety disorder or obsessive compulsive disorder in childhood, on average five years prior to the onset of their eating disorder. Where society pushes guilt and blame, science reveals that anorexia is not chosen willfully.

Anorexia is an illness. It has the highest mortality rate of all psychiatric illnesses. The 10-year survival rate is comparable to that of malignant melanoma. The symptoms of anorexia impact every area of a person's life. Some effects are reversible, some are not. Osteoporosis can occur. Muscles become weak and muscle mass is lost. Fainting, fatigue and general feelings of weakness are normal. Does this sound conducive to enhanced performance? Anorexia is a disease, not a competition strategy.

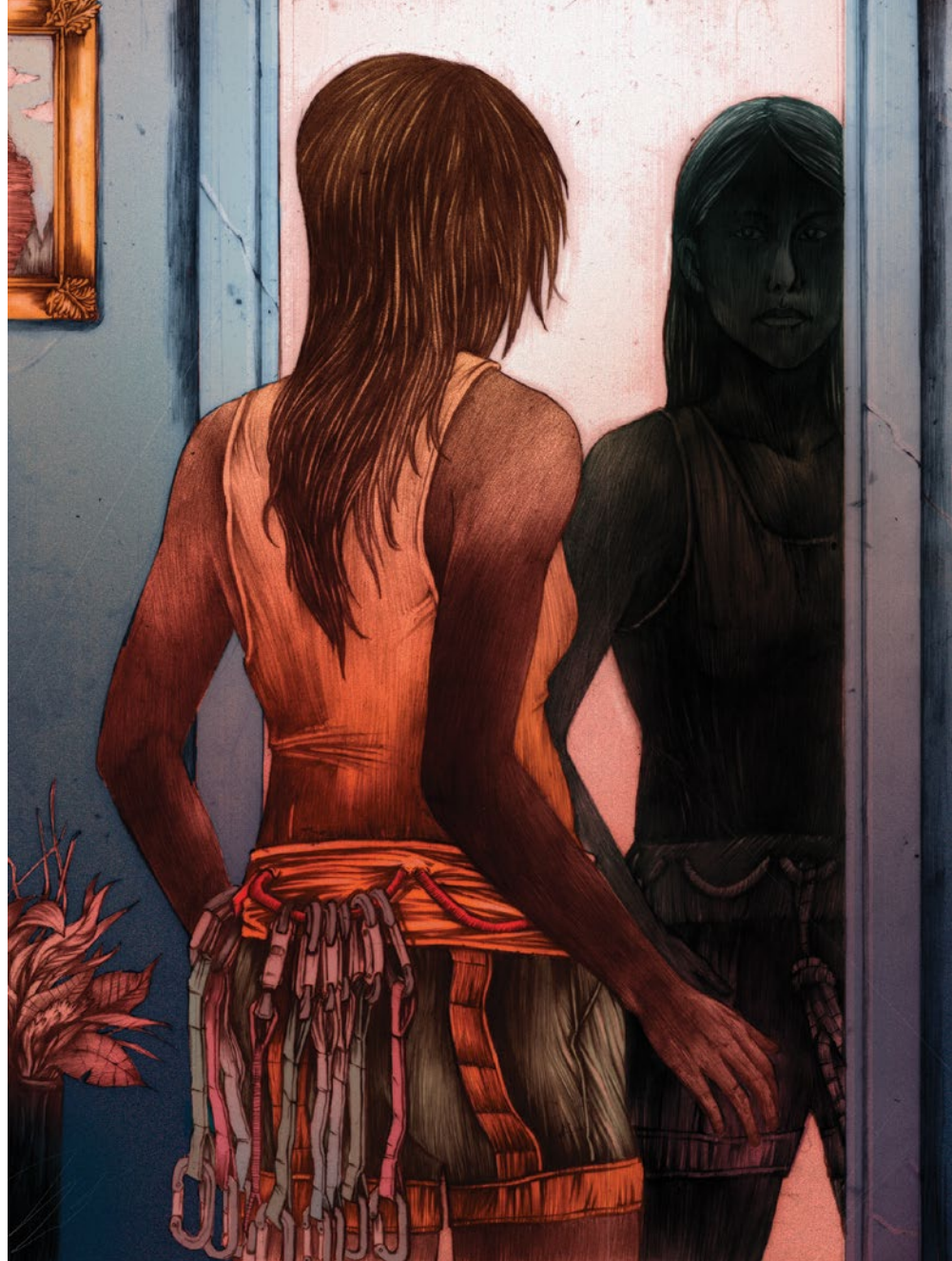
Anorexia is not a body type; not all light people or thin people are anorexic. The media's portrayal of "the anorexic" is one-sided and misrepresentative. I'm not going to tell you how much I weigh to convince you I have an eating disorder any more than I'm going

to tell you what grades I climb to convince you I'm a climber, because I don't endorse that attitude. When I was diagnosed I met the DSM-V criteria for anorexia and still didn't think I "looked anorexic." I leveraged the pop culture perception of anorexia to convince myself I didn't have a problem. I've always felt anorexia snuck up on me, using stereotypes as cover. Anorexia can be incredibly dangerous before extremes of low body weight are reached. In fact, anorexia can kill you before you ever have a chance to "look anorexic."

Eating disorders affect up to 70 million individuals worldwide. Anorexia is the third most common chronic illness among adolescents. A young woman with anorexia is 12 times more likely to die than a woman her age without anorexia.

And what about in climbing specifically? Think about all the times you've heard the phrase "power to weight ratio" or paid extra for lighter quickdraws or heard someone berated at the gym that they only stuck that move because they don't weigh anything. Female athletes in esthetic sports have been found to be the highest risk group for developing eating disorders and this isn't to say that males aren't at risk too. According to the National Association for Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders in judged sports – sports where performance is scored – the prevalence of eating disorders is higher. In a comparison of the psychological profiles of athletes and those with anorexia, ANAD found many factors in common: perfectionism, high self-expectations, competitiveness, hyperactivity, repetitive exercise routines, compulsiveness, drive, tendency toward depression, body image distortion and pre-occupation with dieting and weight.

In the middle of my last competition season, I walked into the counselling centre of my university and requested an appointment. I was weighing myself multiple times a day and "body checking," pinching my belly and hips multiples times an hour. I would never have admitted to being on a diet, but for years I had an increasingly rigid food and exercise regime and was prone to severe anxiety attacks when my plans were disturbed. My "safe" foods list was always shrinking. I measured and rearranged food to soothe myself. I read nutrition information compulsively; I shopped by those labels, hoarded recipes and ate only what I prepared from scratch. I cried when the counsellor asked me why I had come to see her. I told her I wanted to be a good role model for the younger girls on my team. So we decided to challenge my food rules and everything went to hell. Taking away those



rules took away the only thing I felt I could control. It caused a spiral effect. I cut my food intake in half, then quarters and sometimes didn't eat. I tallied calories religiously. I spent hours in the kitchen obsessing over food, opening and closing the door of the fridge, paralyzed by anxiety. My weight plummeted. My grades in school plummeted. My athletic performance hit the floor. My counsellor leapt into action: she referred me to an intensive outpatient program for people with diagnosed eating disorders.

Recovery has been full of ups and downs. Shortly after my diagnosis I had to stop climbing. Six months later, I am still not allowed to exert myself because my heart activity and weight are not where my doctor wants them. I miss climbing very much. The bitterness in Durif's article stung more than the needle for the bloodwork my doctor had requested that day. I realized that anorexia in climbing is something that needs to be talked about and that my perspective is valuable to that conversation. Anorexia has no place in competitive climbing. I vote we combat it with awareness, compassion, early intervention and the support of a strong, passionate community.

It's never too early to seek help for an eating disorder. If someone comes to you for help, listen without judgment and take them seriously. You could save a climbing career or a life.

Sarah Spurell is a 19-year-old climber based in Newfoundland. She hopes to return to competitive climbing sooner, rather than later.



Mark Smith

Ontario's Heavyweight Champ

Photo Aldas Odonellis

Story by Leslie Timms

Mark Smith is kind of a mystical legend in and around Ontario. Tales bounce around the crags of a giant man that can put an all-you-can-eat buffet out of business and then dance up a technical 5.14 face or reach through the blank section of another unsent wall with his massive arms. This giant man that defies gravity and defies odds does in-fact exist and the stories are true.

The average male competitive rock climber is around 5'9" and weighs 150 lbs. In a sport where strength to weight-ratio is so evidently important, it is amazing that Mark Smith took to climbing in the first place and what he has since accomplished in the sport is even more impressive. When Mark started rock climbing at the age of 13, he was 5'6" and weighed 250 lbs. with a 44-inch waste. "I didn't fit into a beginner harness and instead was walked around several times by the instructor with a seat belt style harness," said Smith.

He was the kid inside playing video games and eating junk food, lounging around indoors. Mark caught the climbing bug on his first day out. "Gravity really put my lack of fitness into perspective," said Smith. "I remember walking into the training area and trying to hang off the hang board on the biggest holds. I managed a six-second hang and knew I could improve." Smith is now 30 years old and has grown to be 6'3", slimmed down to 225 lbs. and morphed into an established 5.14 climber, avid route developer and one of the most psyched climbers on earth.

The first time I met Smith was eight years ago in the Red River Gorge. He stood out; he's a massive guy with red hair and a big smile. He and his mentor, Daniel Martian, would drive to Red River Gorge from Ontario almost every weekend to send their mega-projects. They would train and work all week, drive through the night on Friday, awake to an alpine start on both Saturday and Sunday and then drive home at 2 p.m. on Sunday afternoon. I'd never witnessed such motivation and discipline in my life. To this day, Smith is still the first person at the crag, he'll be at the base of his project at 8 a.m. in the snow or rain and still trying to red-point on his fifth try of the day. Blood gushing out of his finger-tips never seems to slow him down. This endless stoke and genuine love of climbing has led him to become one of the strongest sport climbers in Ontario. After his send of Ontario's Titan at Lion's Head, some elite climbers suggested he is one of the heaviest climbers to ever climb 5.14. A notable feat in a gravity fighting sport. Since Titan, Smith has climbed over 15 5.13d to 5.14a routes in Ontario and the States. His most memorable was Lion's Head Express, a 5.14a/b that took him four years to complete. "Finally, on the fourth season I started over and began working the route with my very patient, soon-to-be wife," said Smith. "I sent the route on one of the absolute last days of the season and it was an amazing, intense experience to top out, jump off and lower to be beside my best friend and the first ascensionist Daniel Martian."

Being so big and powerful definitely has its drawbacks. Smith is always fighting an endless hunger. When he is on the wall, he's been known to rip off key holds on well-travelled climbs and has

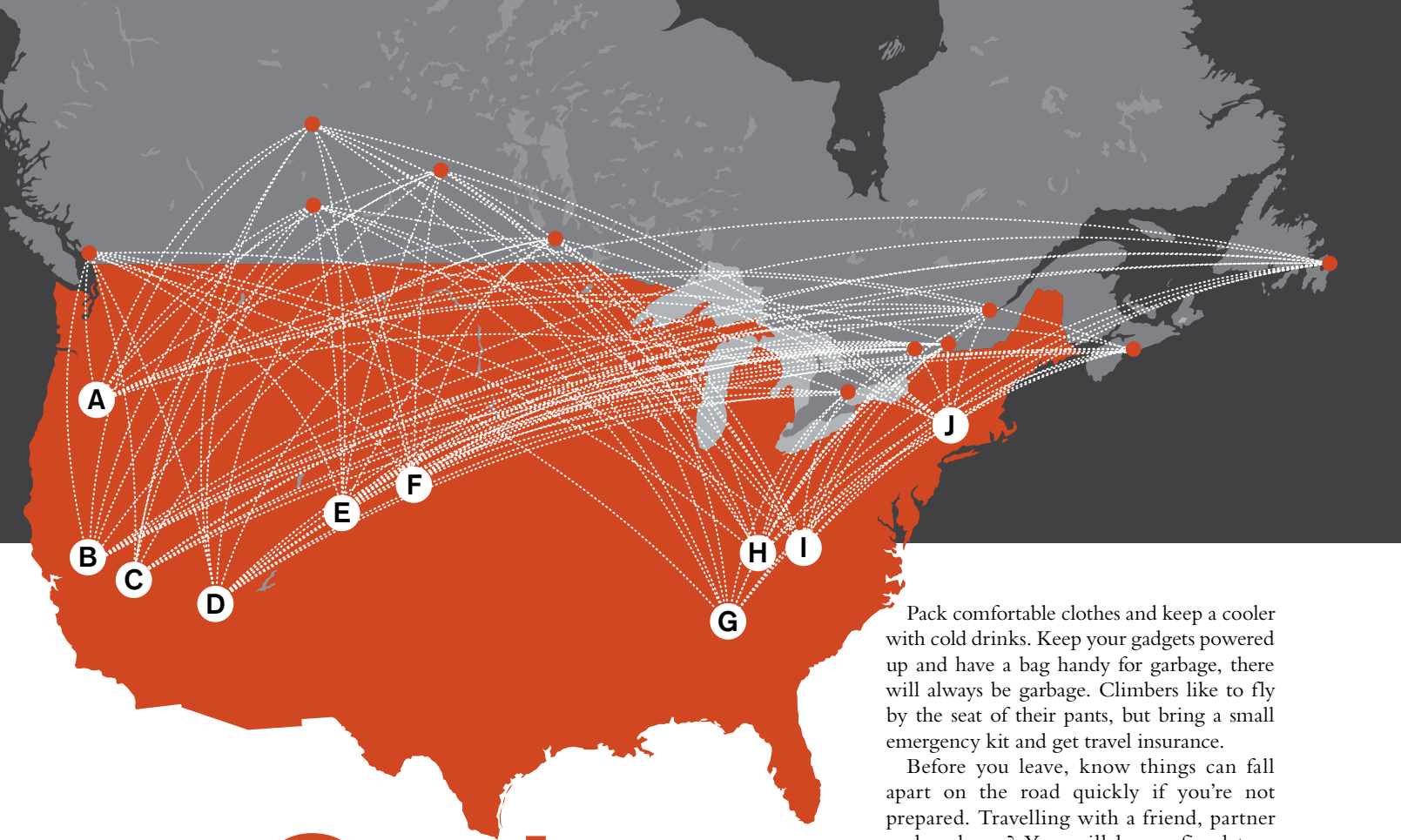
broken gym holds off the wall. "One time in a climbing competition, I went to match and control the hold with my other hand in order for the judge to count it as a completed problem," said Smith. "I ripped off the entire jug and fell to a standing position next to the judge with both hands still on the hold. I placed it on his clip board and said you may have a problem using this hold again."

Motivation in its purest form has helped Smith defy gravity for years and evolve into a technical rock climbing machine. Unclimbed lines and unfinished projects in the Beaver Valley and Lion's Head are falling to his super powers, his uncanny wing span coupled with mutant power and perfect footwork. Some of his first ascents will see very few repeats despite the modest grades. Routes like his recent addition to Lion's Head, Stretch the Limit, a 5.13c with a giant two-metre lateral crux move. It is almost as though some of these impossible looking, incredibly reachy faces are just waiting for him and you'll be sure that he's searching for them. Smith is also a keen route developer in Ontario, with red tags or first ascents ranging anywhere from 5.10 to 5.13+ and some have quickly turned into crag classics. "It's really fun to find something that seems impossible, look for holds and then start dreaming of a way to do it. I finally found a sequence for the first route I ever bolted, which will go at about 5.13+. It's been on my mind for the last 10 years." He takes pride in safety and loves opening new climbs for others to experience, with his favourite being a route that he put up this past summer called Thirty Years in the Making, a 5.13a that he bolted on his 30th birthday.

Smith lives in Wiarton with his wife. There have been known sightings during the summer months at Ontario crags in the Beaver Valley and Bruce Peninsula, as well as southeastern U.S. crags in the spring and fall. He is contagiously friendly, stoked and always hunting for hard new routes.

Leslie Timms is one of Canada's strongest climbers and a regular contributor to Gripped.

Above: Mark Smith on the first ascent of Wild Fire 5.13c, Devil's Glen, Ont.



Spring Road Trip

Tips and tricks for your next roady

A great climbing road trip starts when you leave your house and comforts behind. Pack the climbing gear, but don't over-pack the unnecessary things you won't need. Pack your gear in containers and duffel bags, everything should have a home. A change of clothes, guide books and a sleeping kit should do it. Leave the routine behind. You can sleep anywhere when you're on the road. Wake up early to watch the sunrise or sleep in. Early morning hours are sublime, waiting for the temps to rise while you down cup after cup of camp stove coffee. There's nothing better than losing yourself to the ebb and flow of the weather and conditions.

Pack comfortable clothes and keep a cooler with cold drinks. Keep your gadgets powered up and have a bag handy for garbage, there will always be garbage. Climbers like to fly by the seat of their pants, but bring a small emergency kit and get travel insurance.

Before you leave, know things can fall apart on the road quickly if you're not prepared. Travelling with a friend, partner or loved one? You will be confined to a vehicle for long periods. Be sure everyone is ready to drive their share and give each other space to breathe. Split the costs of travel, be a team, keep the car clean and keep the mood light. Support each other, you're one unit on the road. Make the most of rest days by going swimming, biking or playing chess (bring a chess board).

Start training for the trip a month before you leave. There's nothing worse than hitting the road without any training and getting your butt kicked for the first two weeks. Even if you have been training, don't jump out of the gates sprinting. Ease into the trip, being too keen can get you injured. You can climb for a few days in a row, but take rest days. On those rest days, don't just sit around drinking coffee and beer. Get a lot of water into your system. How much? Some climbers try for three to four litres. You'll pee a lot. On climb days and rest days, be sure to eat more than you would at home. You're burning energy around the clock, so get the calories you need. You'll feel better for it.

If you're on a budget, there are a few things to consider. Many climbers convert a van or truck to a camping vehicle, to save on camping costs. Most climbing areas have spots where the van dwellers sleep. It's easy to find free Wi-Fi and limit your phone use. Cooking your own meals is a must, but treat

Top10 American Road Trip Stops

- A. Smith Rocks
- B. Yosemite
- C. Bishop
- D. Red Rocks
- E. Moab
- F. Eldorado Canyon
- G. Chattanooga
- H. Red River Gorge
- I. New River Gorge
- J. Gunks

yourself once a week. Eat cold foods that don't need to be cooked such as wraps, crackers and humus, pre-cooked meats, bars and anything from bulk food. Buy cheap beer. The other things to consider are entertainment, climbing guidebooks, toiletries, entry fees and any gear you might buy on the way.

Road tripping is about having fun, pushing hard, chilling out and letting go of the routine back home. Some folks live on the road, some use it for a week at a time and others have never gone on a road trip. Put some time aside this spring and get lost.

From B.C. and Alberta

In the spring, B.C. has a number of road tripping crags. The popular ones are Squamish, Skaha and Revelstoke, depending on where you're coming from. In Alberta, the spring can be touch and go. The high mountains have a long winter, but the Bow Valley's south facing walls will be dry.

Heading south on your pilgrimage into

America's Northwest, you have alpine climbing in the Cascades, splitter basalt at Trout Creek, endless cragging at City of Rock, high desert climbing at Smith Rock with over 1,500 sport routes with high first bolts and world-class granite climbing at Leavenworth.

Continue south to Arizona's Mount Lemmon and Utah's Cottonwood Canyons and sandstone walls of Moab and Indian Creek. Head west to the bolted big walls in Red Rocks, world-class granite in Yosemite, the bold routes of Joshua Tree and the esthetic Needles. A lifetime of climbing can be found in California alone.

From Alberta, bee-line it south to the American Rockies. The arid climate makes for perfect road trip weather in spring. Rocky Mountain National Park was made for alpine climbers, Vedaawoo is an offwidth climber's dream, Shelf Road has more sport climbs than you can count, Wyoming's Ten Sleep is never crowded, but offers outstanding limestone to 5.14. If you're feeling strong, then head to Colorado's classic Eldo and Rifle canyons. If you want to get up high, try for some early season climbing in the Grand Tetons.

From Saskatchewan and Manitoba

If you want to stay in Canada, it's not far from Manitoba to the rock in northern Ontario or from Saskatchewan to the Rockies. If you're looking to head south, there's lots of options within a day. Drive to the stunning quartzite crags at Devil's Lake in Wisconsin or the narrow Spearfish Canyon in South Dakota. The old-school large boulders in the Wichita Mountains of Oklahoma provide good value as does the pegmatite granite spires around Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. A must-climb is the iconic basalt Devil's Tower in Wyoming. Few climbers know of the limestone walls of Barn Bluff in Minnesota. Many folks head to Arkansas for the sandstone climbing in Horseshoe Canyon Ranch.

From Ontario, Quebec and the East Coast

The East can have great early season rock climbing, but some crags are slow to dry. It's best to head south in the spring. The American Northeast offers excellent climbing at New York's Shawangunks and the timeless climbs at North Conway. Looking for something different, then head to Maine's Acadia National Park for some oceanside cragging.

Venture farther south and find the must-visit Red River Gorge in Kentucky, the famous sandstone of New River Gorge and the amazing bouldering at Chattanooga. Looking for some stout routes, then visit the steep walls at Alabama's Little River Canyon, where there are plenty of hard routes for the serious climber.

No matter what you're looking for this spring, there are dozens of road tripping options. Check your oil and drive safe.—BP

Driving Distances (km)	Vancouver	Calgary	Edmonton	Saskatoon	Winnipeg	Toronto	Ottawa	Montreal	Quebec City	Halifax	St. John's
Smith Rocks	725	1,271	1,561	1,936	2,486	4,079	4,515	4,607	4,868	5,858	7,150
Yosemite	1,679	2,432	2,722	2,698	3,214	4,354	4,792	4,881	5,143	6,132	7,425
Bishop	1,686	2,198	2,488	2,463	2,980	3,904	4,340	4,431	4,692	5,682	6,974
Red Rocks	2,052	2,118	2,408	2,384	2,783	3,646	4,082	4,173	4,435	5,424	6,717
Moab	1,943	1,795	2,085	2,060	2,284	2,989	3,425	3,516	3,778	4,836	6,129
Eldorado Canyon	2,334	1,752	2,042	1,606	1,742	2,447	2,883	2,974	3,236	4,225	5,518
Chattanooga	4,276	3,604	3,605	3,083	2,365	1,368	1,759	1,850	2,101	2,770	4,063
Red River Gorge	4,198	3,390	3,333	2,810	2,092	1,026	1,465	1,556	1,818	2,562	3,854
New River Gorge	4,446	3,593	3,536	3,014	2,296	890	1,260	1,351	1,613	2,321	3,614
Gunks	4,830	3,977	3,920	3,530	2,680	698	573	478	712	1,463	2,756

Ontario Stone

A conversation with photographer Peter Hoang

Canada's diverse climbing landscapes have great potential for photographers. The East and West coast's dramatic granite walls that rise from the ocean offer unforgettable views of solid stone and endless water. The rolling hills of Quebec and interior B.C. and the dramatic backdrop of pointy summits in the Rockies give a photographer never-ending possibilities. Ontario's tall pines, birch, maple and oak trees combined with deep, blue lakes and treasured sunsets and rises, make it one of Peter Hoang's favourite place to photograph climbers.

Hoang started climbing after his friend gave him two locking carabiners and the classic climbing book by Arno Ilgner, *The Rock Warrior's Way*. After reading the book, Hoang decided the only way he'd understand it is to start climbing. Hoang prefers to shoot ice and crack climbing, "The esthetics of a natural line puts a climber on an obvious path," said Hoang. "In general, I just like to get out and shoot my friends pushing themselves."

Matthew Sapiecha
on Mc Jiggy 5.10c,
Pass Lake, Ont.



Photo: Peter Hoang



native stones

What is your favourite place to climb?

I love the North Conway in New Hampshire, for both fall and winter. A 10-hour drive from Toronto will yield some of the best granite splitters and wildest ice and mixed lines. You don't have to travel to the West Coast to be exposed to a passionate climbing culture and rich history.

Ontario offers unique challenges to the climbing photographer. How do you deal with the terrain in Ontario?

Many of the cliffs I've frequented are deep within the tree line, so it can be a little more challenging to showcase the larger environment. For these type of crags, I've done my best to focus on the climber's movement or paid close attention to their framing. There's always something of value to work with, you just need to find it and rely less on the environment to do the work for you. I find it comparable to learning trad on Ontario limestone – it does a decent job preparing you for other areas.

There are hundreds of Ontario routes that have never been photographed "correctly." What are some that you'd like to shoot?

I'd love to spend more time up in Thunder Bay shooting some of the larger routes. I had a chance to climb there when I was there for a wedding. I discovered that there's way too much rock and not enough climbers/photographers/developers. All it takes is a few good photos and Internet up-votes to stoke the fire.

Do you plan on shooting or do you just bring your camera along with you and whatever happens, happens?

Admittedly, most of my shots are done on the fly when climbing adjacent routes to my subjects. There's always this constant battle between climbing and photography when I'm out – unless I'm on assignment. I make exceptions though, if I know a friend has been working on a route and it would mean a lot to have it documented in good style. This hasn't happened yet, but if I caught wind of a big route going down, I'd probably drop a climbing day to capture it.



Above: **Jason Bouchard** on the Blue Nun, 5.11d, at a crag near Milton, Ont.

Right: **Julia Cetnar** at the base of Chinese Water Torture 5.11, Pass Lake, Ont.

Opposite: **Anna Pirkó** at the finger crack crux on Dick's Direct, 5.10c, Mount Nemo, Ont.



What's your favourite climbing photo by another photographer?

There's a photo Frederic Hasbani took of Anna Bauvois on the North Face of Mount Olan. She's on the side of the mountain in some obviously rainy and poor weather. Her jacket and gear is completely saturated, and her arms are out of her sleeves and against her body – presumably to preserve heat. What makes the photo my favourite is Anna's contrasting grin against the rest of the scene. The photo encompasses what I love most about climbing photography – capturing the climber in the mountain environment.

Coming in second would be the photo of Doug Scott rappelling with two broken legs on the Ogre expedition. It would be amazing to be in a position to capture such an amazing feat.

Tell me about your photo of Spotted Turtle.

Halfway Log Dump is located by Tobermory, along the Bruce Peninsula. It was closed for a while, but a recent victory from the Ontario Access Coalition has opened it up for climbing. There's enough problems there to satisfy the occasional visitor and seasoned local. Spotted Turtle V1 is in a bit of an open area, so I had a chance to frame it ahead of time to showcase more of the location.





What did you think about Pass Lake?

My first time at Pass Lake. I found the grades there comparable to southern Ontario. I may be a bad person to ask about grades though. I find the more places I visit to climb, the more my ability to assess a route's grade diminishes. I'd definitely visit Pass Lake again – a 20-second approach to quality climbs with a bakery across the street is an easy sell.

How did you capture Blue Nun?

There's actually another overhang above Jason, so it put me more out from his position. The lens distortion also makes him look a little further out than he really was. I think he had about one or two more moves before I had to jump out of his way. The cliff's about 20 minutes from the car, but if it's your first time there, perhaps allot more time, since the down-climb can be easy to miss. Jason definitely sent that day, just not on that particular burn.

The photo encompasses what I love most about climbing photography – capturing the climber in the mountain environment.

Did you plan on shooting Windy City?

I did plan on this shot. In my opinion, if you're photographing routes at Lion's Head, it's important to emphasize both the water and exposure – very prominent features. It's what keeps you going back, and what draws in the visitors. For this particular photo, I led the route and had someone else belay so I could take a photo of Dave seconding the route. An interesting thing to note is there wasn't enough rope to lower the line back down to the ground to haul up extra gear, so you might notice that Dave has two pairs of shoes and some extra junk on his harness in this photo.

When did you shoot Dick's Direct?

This photo was taken in October, just before a particularly cold winter. Lucky for me, my friends are super pals and went out to a less-travelled section of the cliff so I could try a route called Tender Passions. The route is right beside Dick's Direct, so I kept the line-up after I finished to take photos. I figured if my friends bothered to come out to belay me, I should at least take good photos of them on the adjacent routes.

Visit Hoang's website at peter-hoang.com for more great images of climbing, not just in Ontario, but across North America. –BP

Above: **Matthew Sapiecha** on Spotted Turtle V1, Halfway Dump, Ont.



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The Lynn Valley

Amazing Climbing in Vancouver's Backyard

From sparkling sea cliffs to cool, refreshing creek canyons, Tolkienesque boulder-fields to backcountry alpine ridges, there's something for all climbers in Vancouver's North Shore Mountains. For diversity and convenience, Lynn Headwaters Park is tough to beat.

North Vancouver's vibrant Lynn Valley neighbourhood sits between the forested slopes of Mount Fromme and Mount Seymour. Regionally famous for its natural parks, it affords instant access to an excellent network of beloved trails frequented mostly by mountain bikers, hikers and trail runners. What many climbers might not know is that Lynn Valley is a convenient launch pad for some of the North Shore's finest rock climbing.

Opposite: **Pete Lindgren** on In the Bubble 5.12b, Sully's Hangout, Lynn Valley

Above: **Tim Catcher** on the Toadstool V3, Lynn Boulders

Story and photos by **Rich Wheeler**

Logistics

While climbing is permitted within Lynn Headwaters Park, it will always be a sensitive issue. With thousands of visitors each year to this highly sensitive environment, Metro Vancouver Parks has adopted strict policy favouring environmental preservation and careless acts by climbers (or anyone else) may jeopardize access. Always act responsibly and minimize your impact by practicing leave-no-trace ethics wherever possible.

The village of Lynn Valley sits immediately northeast of Hwy 1 in North Vancouver, in between Mount Fromme and Mount Seymour. Access is off Hwy 1 via Exit 19 or from the south via Mountain Highway. Lynn Headwaters Park is located at the far end of Lynn Valley Road and is adjacent to, but north of Lynn Canyon Park.



With the feel of a small mountain town, Lynn Valley supports a bouquet of diverse climbing venues, including the Squamish-style Lynn Boulders, the vertical sport-fest at Sully's Hangout and the lofty alpine wonderland of Crown Mountain with its old-school crag The Camel and coveted ridge climb, Widowmaker Arête 5.10a. Most of the action lies within Lynn Headwaters Park and is accessed via the Lynn Loop trail. This popular path runs alongside Lynn Creek for three kilometres and continues beyond as the more rugged Headwaters Trail, which leads past Norvan Falls to the enchanted Hanes Valley and ultimately up to Crown Mountain, the tallest craggy peak you can see from the city (other than the Lions).

Developed almost a decade ago, Sully's Hangout is a fully bolted crag about 30 metres tall, hiding in the trees on the steep west side of Lynn Peak's long, southern shoulder. With nearly 30 routes, this is the perfect after-work crag where climbers can enjoy a gym-like session in a natural, rainforest environment. There's a good variety of technical climbs from 5.7 to 5.12b and many are slightly overhanging, demanding precise technique – and endurance – to navigate a profliery of interesting holds. The green granite is bullet-hard with fantastic friction and heavily featured. Because of the surrounding forest the cliff usually takes several days to dry, or longer when the temperatures are cool and days short. The routes are well travelled, but many retain a tenacious moss that, despite a curious esthetic, doesn't actually affect the climbing. Routes you won't want to miss include Lubo 5.11a, Shake Your Lettuce 5.11a and Hindu Two Routes 5.10d.

At the far, upper reaches of the Lynn Loop lurk the remote Lynn

Above: **Senja Palonen** on Camel Cracks 5.9, the Camel formation on Crown Mountain

Left: **Shannon Sullivan** on Hindu Two Routes 5.11a, Sully's Hangout, Lynn Valley

Opposite: **Lenise Lewis** on Lubo 5.11a, Sully's Hangout, Lynn Valley

Beta

All Lynn Valley climbing is slated for inclusion in Rich Wheater's forthcoming guidebook *Vancouver Rock Climbing*, scheduled for release in 2015.

Until then, look to Bruce Fairley's classic tome *A Guide to Climbing & Hiking in Southwestern British Columbia* (Gordon Soules 1986) for details on Crown Mountain and Kevin McLane's bible *Alpine Select* (Elaho 2001,) which provides a great description of Widowmaker Arête. Online trip reports and Internet forum threads can also be very helpful and I recommend locally focused websites such as bivouac.com, cascadeclimbers.com, supertopo.com and squamishclimbing.com.

A good topo for Sully's Hangout is currently available at the Quickdraw Books (*Squamish Bouldering* and *Squamish Select*) website: quickdrawpublications.com, but very limited beta currently exists for the Lynn Boulders. Some of the problems are listed on sendage.com.



Lynn Headwaters Park provides diversity in a spectacular, coastal rainforest setting. Coupled with convenient access, this is a Vancouver climber's treasure trove.

Boulders, a monastic order of tumbled blocs that would be right at home in Squamish's Grand Wall forest – minus the crowds. If it weren't for a signpost indicating them as a "point-of-interest," we would never know they existed. Climbing here can be traced back to the early 1990s when a small posse of local boulderers explored the most obvious lines on the biggest three – now dubbed Boss Boulders. Little is known of prior activity, although a couple of mysterious RURPS rusting in a seam below Grand Grimoire indicate they weren't the first. Nowadays there are more than 100 problems and with some cleaning the area has blossomed into what is arguably the best bouldering on the North Shore. Of the most obvious boulders, The Boss, Two Face, Beached Az, The Rib, Grumpy, Battle Axe and Rapa Nui provide a glimpse into the potential. They are quality boulders with classic problems such as Prow Right V7, Swami of the Creek V4, Grand Grimoire V5, Beached Az V9, Hourglass V4, The Peeve V3, Rib Rider V3, Wien Air V1 and Rapa Nui V4.

Finally, we have the backcountry alpine crag of Crown Mountain, which features the most prized multipitch objective in Vancouver, the 12-pitch Widowmaker Arête 5.9. But Crown offers several additional objectives, including the Crater Slabs, The Crater Rim Traverse and some steeper, single pitch cracks on The Camel (5.6 to 5.10a,) Vancouver's first real "crag," as the first climbs were done in 1908.

Although the summit of Crown is most often reached via the Alpine Trail leading directly from Grouse Mountain, some climbers choose to approach from the talus-infused bowels of the remote Hanes Valley, which drops steeply down the east side of Crown and feeding into Lynn Valley. Either way, the strenuous hike exemplifies the typical "coastal alpine" approach – steep, root-infested and not withholding an obligatory slide alder bushwhack. Of the few climbers who've even heard of Crown Mountain, fewer still have savoured the grand setting of these climbs.

Be it a bloc-wrestling throw-down at the Lynn Boulders, a social evening clipping bolts at Sully's Hangout, or a backcountry adventure high up on Crown Mountain, Lynn Headwaters Park provides diversity in a spectacular, coastal rainforest setting. Coupled with convenient access, this is a Vancouver climber's treasure trove.

Rich Wheeler is one of Canada's leading adventure photographers. He is a regular contributor to Grippéd and is based on the West Coast.



Above: **Martin Soon** on the first ascent of Ribbed For Her Pleasure V5, Lynn Boulders

Below: **Chris Hecimovic and Will Stanhope** on Prow Right V7, Lynn Loop Boulders



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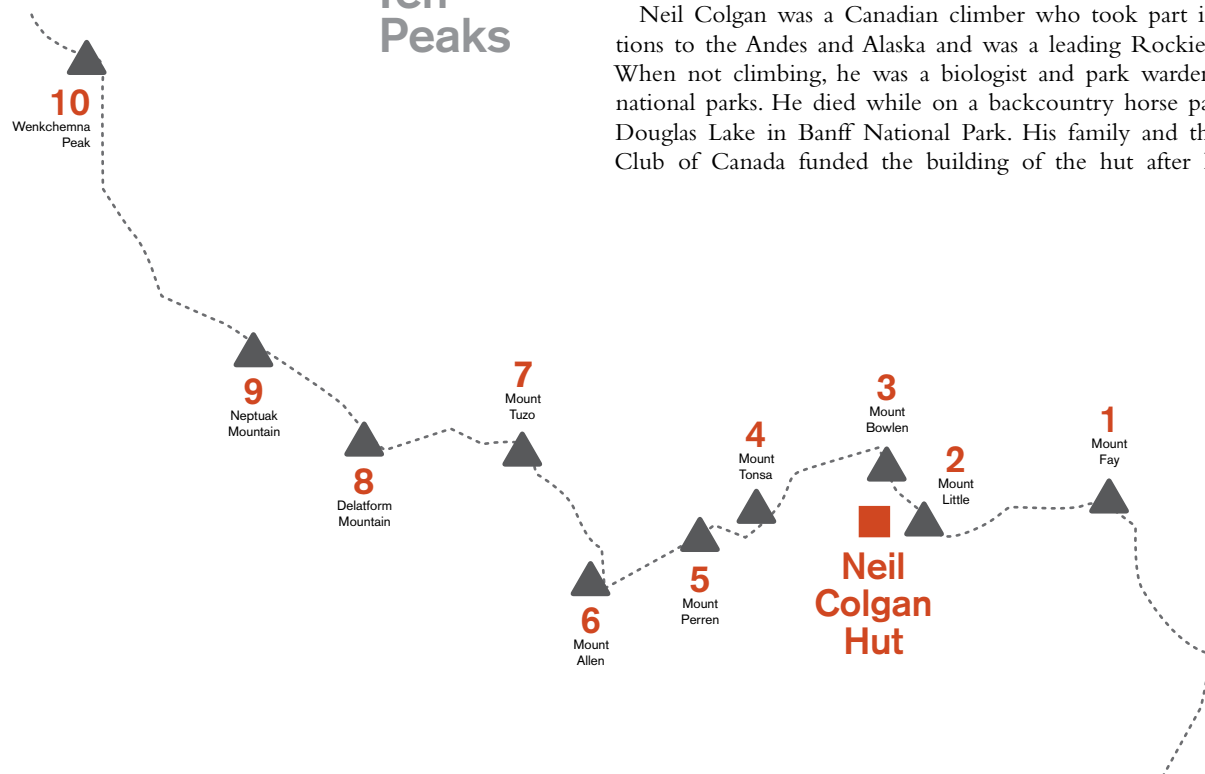
Neil Colgan

Hut

Shelter
in the
Valley
of the
Ten
Peaks

The Valley of the Ten Peaks, Alta., is one of the most photographed mountain panoramas in North America. Few know that the highest permanent, habitable structure in Canada (only 30 metres higher than Abbot Pass Hut) is found there, at 2,955 metres. The Neil Colgan Hut sits in the col between Mount Little and Mount Bowlen. All of the surrounding peaks are over 3,000 metres, making the valley one of the most sought after climbing destinations in North America.

Neil Colgan was a Canadian climber who took part in expeditions to the Andes and Alaska and was a leading Rockies climber. When not climbing, he was a biologist and park warden for the national parks. He died while on a backcountry horse patrol near Douglas Lake in Banff National Park. His family and the Alpine Club of Canada funded the building of the hut after his death.



Sid Marty writes about Colgan in his book *Switchbacks*, in the chapters 'The Dude, the Warden and the Marvel Lake Kid' and 'Whence is Courage?'

The hut is an ideal base for summit bagging. It is common to climb a number of peaks in a day and stop back at the hut for lunch and coffee between missions. The hut can sleep 18 in the summer and 16 in the winter. It is a well-equipped shelter with propane stoves, lanterns all of your cooking supply needs. In the winter, it does not take much to heat things up to a comfortable temperature.

To access the hut from Moraine Lake takes between six and 10 hours, depending on the route you take. There are two popular routes to gain the hut, the Perren Route and the Schiesser Ledges. The Perren Route is the recommended approach. Most of the fifth-class terrain is fixed with chains and protection and is relatively free from objective hazard. In the past, people have used the 3 and 3.5 couloir to access the hut, but too many have underestimated the hazards and a number of climbers have died. If you're going to the hut, take the Perren Route.

From the hut, a number of routes are accessible. From moderate scrambles up Mount Little and Mount Bowlen, just outside the hut, to the north face ice routes on Mount Fay and Mount Quadra. The other peaks have difficulties somewhere in between. If you're unsure of how or when to visit the hut and climb, contact a guide at acmg.ca. Visit the Neil Colgan Hut this summer and go climb a mountain.—BP

Booking Information

Reservations are required at all ACC facilities. Reservations are made through the national office at the Canmore Clubhouse.

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The 10 Peaks

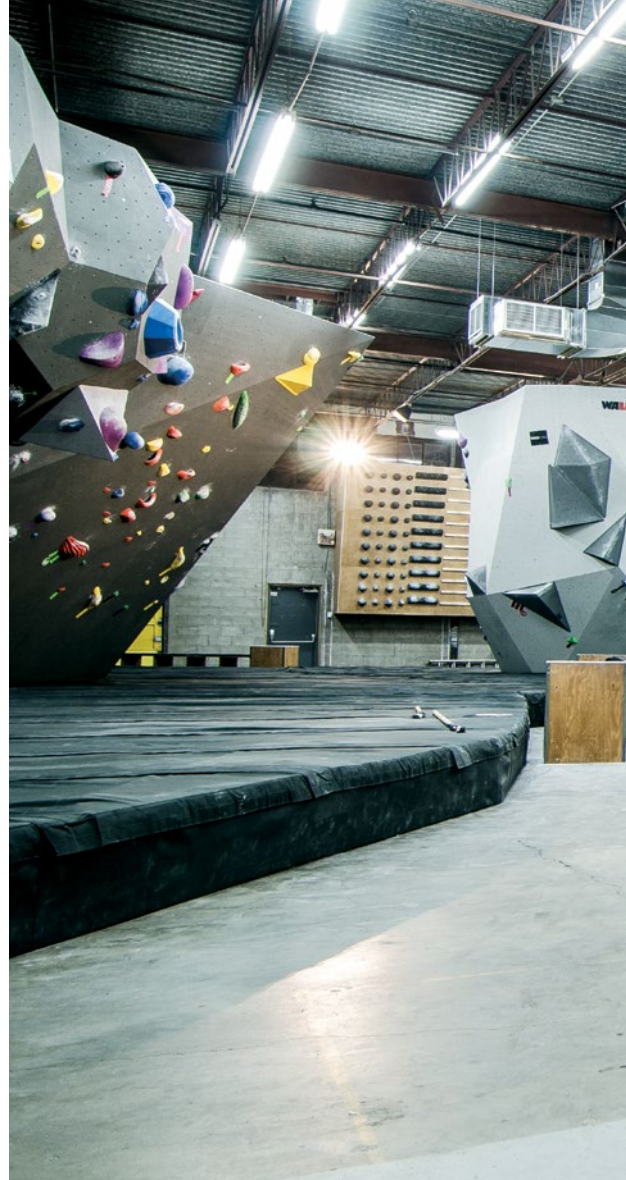
	Peak	Metres	Original Native name
1	Mount Fay	3,235	Heejee
2	Mount Little	3,088	Num
3	Mount Bowlen	3,072	Yamnee
4	Mount Tonsa	3,057	Tonsa
5	Mount Perren	3,051	Sapta
6	Mount Allen	3,310	Shappee
7	Mount Tuzo	3,246	Shagowa
8	Deltaform Mountain	3,424	Shaknowa
9	Neptuak Mountain	3,233	Neptuak
10	Wenkchemna Peak	3,170	Wenkchemna

the gym

Bloc Shop

Montreal's Bouldering Hub

Bloc Shop is Montreal's newest bouldering gym. On the first weekend of July 2014, the grand opening competition captivated Montreal climbers. The gym has become a must-visit training ground for climbers of all ranks. The gym's energy is said to be one-of-a-kind and offers climbers a different and motivating space.



Bloc Shop is a passion project that started as an idea between Nicolas and Fred Charron. Both have been climbing for years and Fred's an experienced route setter and comp climber. Cloé Legault is another local climber and along with Michel Charette, the team of four went to work. Their idea was to build a gym big enough for climbers of all skill levels and to keep things fresh and interesting. "It was something that was needed in Montreal. So we put a project together that represented us and that would cater to climber's needs," said Nicolas.

The four climbers all bring different strengths to the team. Nicolas is the management man, Fred's the training and route-setting brains, Michel has the entrepreneurial skills and Cloé is the esthetic and design guru. They all focus their passion for climbing and have built a gym, where above all, everyone who trains there feels like they belong, they feel at home. Fred had always wanted to run a bouldering gym. "I wanted to have a big bouldering gym in

Photo Nic Charron



Montreal,” said Fred. “I wanted to offer that to climbers, so we could train harder.” Big it is. There is more than enough room for a lot of climbers to mosey around between climbs. It was Charette’s vision to make people feel comfortable and to have a little world where they feel good and can focus. “That’s exactly what we do in the climbing gym,” said Nicolas. “People come in and they climb in a nice environment with good people and good music.”

When you want to rest up, there is a lounge area to have a coffee, snack or a fresh juice. “We really wanted to make Bloc Shop a place for the climbing community, old school and new school, to hang out and train together.”

With nearly 1,000 square metres of bouldering, Bloc Shop was designed with competitions in mind. In the fall of 2014, they hosted their first Tour de Bloc. In 2015, Climbing Escalade Canada is bringing the Open Bouldering National Championships back to Montreal and they will be held at Bloc Shop.

The team said that contributing to the growth of climbing and its positive impact is one of the best parts of owning the gym. “To share our experience and love of climbing, to give back to the community in our dream bouldering and training facility is also a true accomplishment. Not only have we created a truly functional, visually pleasing and chill space, we are super proud to have established the Fondation Bouldering Montréal, a non-profit organization that offers financial support to junior climbers.”—BP

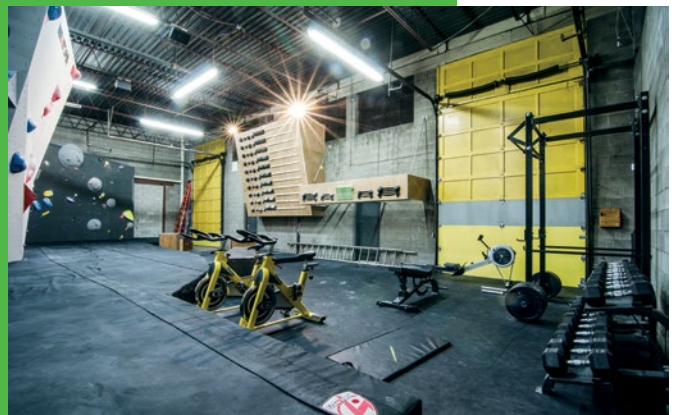
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SPORT

CLIMBING

ON MALLORCA

AN ALL-GIRLS TRIP TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

Story by **Caroline Treadway**



Olivia Hsu on
Chuteur Fou 7b+
(5.12c), Santanyi

Hot urine dripped down my thigh. I was barefoot and balanced on sharp limestone edges and trying to concentrate. Between my legs was a lean, golden arm. I was aiming for the bicep and the puffy, red welts. Cupping my hands, I guided the salty, vino-rich solution onto the fresh jellyfish stings. No easy task when dying of laughter.

The rest of the trip Olivia would say, “Caroline, I love you so much, I would pee on your arm any day.” We were just four girls huddled on a rock in the middle of the Mediterranean laughing our butts off. We had escaped to climb in Mallorca for the week. We rented an airy apartment a half-block from the beach in Sillot. A small seaside village on the island’s east coast, Sillot is a 20-minute drive from Porto Cristo, a great deep water solo spot. If we were on that trip 15 years ago, we would’ve been looking for boys, but now we look for rock to climb.

It’s Carrie’s first vacation from her husband and two kids in five years. “All I want to do is deep water solo,” she said. A former professional dancer, she has green eyes and an unruly blonde mane. She’s savouring every second of her fleeting freedom. “That’s what it’s about for me. Overcoming my fear.” Topless, she flings her arms to the sky, lets out a yell and dives into the water.

Daila, 33, is a lithe, Delphine goddess from the Canary Islands. A talented and accomplished climber in her own right, Daila has climbed in Mallorca numerous times with her ex-boyfriend, Chris Sharma. Sharma established the hardest deep water solo in the world, Es Pontas 5.15b, off the island’s southeast coast. Daila now lives in Italy, making a living as a professional climber. It had been years since she visited Mallorca.

Olivia is a 38-year-old professional climber and yoga teacher from Boulder, Colo. Of Taiwanese descent, Olivia has long, shiny, rebellious hair that she often pins back into a bun. She has the body of someone who practices yoga in their sleep (which I’ve witnessed). Ten years ago, her fiancé was killed in a climbing accident. Her new husband is Cory Richards, a well-known alpinist and National Geographic photographer. When he called from an expedition in Myanmar via satellite phone at 3 a.m., I could hear in her voice that she was nervous.

Then there’s me, a writer and photographer at the beginning of a two-month work trip in Spain and Romania with Olivia. Independent to a fault, I’m constantly on the road. Too busy for a boyfriend, or even my own friends. I could be compensating for something. In the past two years, I’ve lost two close relationships. I got over the boyfriend, but losing my best girlfriend still hurts.

We made our way over to one of the deep water soloing caves at Cala Varques. Climbers dotted the cliffs like seabirds. One by one, they traced their line up the orange limestone wall that rose 20 metres above the inky sea. “Venga, venga, venga!” yelled the

Right: **Daila Ojeda**
Climbing in Cala
Santanyi

Below Right:
The deep water
soloing scene at
Cala Varques



We made our way over to one of the deep water soloing caves at Cala Varques. Climbers dotted the cliffs like seabirds. One by one, they traced their line up the orange limestone wall that rose 20 metres above the inky sea.





Photos: Caroline Treadway, Caroline Treadway, David Clifford

CLIMBING IN MALLORCA

The island of Mallorca is one of Europe's premier sport climbing destinations. Mallorca is also the top European destination for deep water soloing. The climbing ranges from slabs to steep overhangs to tufas to big roofs and cracks. The majority of the climbing is single pitch. Getting around on the roads is easy. The island is often quiet in the off-season, anytime other than summer.

Southwest Mallorca

Around Palma and Valldemossa is the largest crag on Mallorca, Sa Gubia, which has a number of multi-pitch routes. Fraguel crag has the highest quantity of quality hard routes on the island.

Northwest Mallorca

Between Soller and Inca are the highest peaks on Mallorca. A number of worthy crags can be found here, including La Creveta.

Eastern Mallorca

The east side of the island does not have many crags. Most of the deep water soloing takes place in the bays on this part of Mallorca.

Opposite: Olivia Hsu
on Jungle Hop 7a
(5.11c/d), Fraguel

peanut gallery, an international group of onlookers and climbers. Carrie pulled the lip and mantled, her right foot dangled 20 metres over the dark water. Then Daila went, wearing a hot pink bikini and a long black braid. Then Olivia, with the impeccable ease of a ballerina. Each climbed in her own style. Each made it look effortless.

We climbed, fell into the water and tanned on the rocks. Tourists threw themselves headlong into the black waters from brow-raising heights. White sailboats cruised by. At sunset, we reconvened atop one of the many arches overlooking the sea. We opened jars of olives and tuna and squeezed them between handfuls of fresh bread. I uncorked the remainder of the wine.

"For me, deep water soloing is fun for the rest day, but it's not the best conditions for trying something at your limit," said Daila. "I love to try hard routes, but I don't want to feel like I am going to die." Deep water soloing is fun. What's more romantic than climbing sea cliffs with only the ocean to catch you? The reality of the sport is not so romantic. "I had a moment where I was like, this is ridiculous," said Olivia. "I put my foot on a wet hold and water squished out and I think a fish just jumped out of my shoe."

The sky turned purple and a red moon rose out of the sea. We watched the blood moon lunar eclipse climb into the sky. A soft, salty breeze and the sounds of beach volleyball washed over us.

The deep water soloing scene at Cala Barques is new and growing. Thirty years ago, things were different. "Miguel was really alone when he started," said Daila. Miguel Riera grew up scaling the island's sea cliffs, alone. Known as the father of deep water soloing, he coined the term psicobloc, which has caught on around the globe. "Miguel was doing crazy solos when nobody was thinking about climbing that stuff," said Daila. "When Sharma was deep water soloing, he was just one guy, alone, trying the route. He told people it's cool and then it became super cool. At the beginning he was alone and would jump from high off the rock, very crazy."

Dozens of sport crags sit in the high forests and canyons above the crowded sea cliffs. They are higher, cooler and can offer better climbing conditions than the sea cliffs, which can be crowded, hot and slimy. There are about 60 sport climbing areas on the island.

The next day, we split up. Carrie headed to the Diablo Cave to try her project, the Ejector Seat. Olivia, Daila and I headed to Fraguel, near the town of Bunyola, for sport climbing. Finding Fraguel required moderate route finding skills. We drove for one-hour up a curvy road through dry hillsides of olive groves, almond trees and fan palms. We passed a gate and parked on the right. Then we descended the trail, climbed down some slippery rungs, then stayed high and right. Soon we found ourselves in a canyon of swooping limestone walls, filled with dense vegetation and exotic birds. High above Mallorca's capital, Palma, Fraguel offers over 60 sport climbs from 5.10 to 5.14. It's September and the tufas that were wet for months were finally dry. Cool air settled in the canyon, we climbed into the dark and hiked out with headlamps, hoping no one locked the gate.

That night we dined with Miguel. Tanned, fit and handsome, he wore a blue collared shirt and white pants. His family has lived in Mallorca for 500 years. "It has a name so it exists," said Miguel. "If something has a name, it's more real, more commercial. We say *humo de venta* or 'selling smoke.' To make something out of nothing. Today, deep water soloing is so popular and so commercial, it's the accessible solo."

Popularity brings access issues. Most of the sea cliffs are on private property. Technically, deep water soloing is forbidden. But that rule is seldom enforced, but there have been stories about recent crackdowns.





Opposite: **Daila Ojeda**
on Transexual 7b
(5.12b), Cala Barques

Above: **Carrie Cooper**
on Ejector Seat 7C
(5.12d), Cova del
Diablo

It's not usually the climbers who get injured. They have good muscle tone and body tension when they fall. It's the tourists who get hurt.

“Two years ago, there were many helicopters coming to the first cave, pulling people out of the water,” said Miguel. “It’s not usually the climbers who get injured. They have good muscle tone and body tension when they fall. It’s the tourists who get hurt. Spinal injuries and one dead from internal bleeding.” Some towns adjacent to climbing areas have begun charging for land use. It’s something to be aware of when you go to Mallorca. Ask around to get the latest news.

On the last day, we climbed routes at Tijuana, a seaside area in Santanyi. Across the water we could see the Arch, where Carrie was trying her project. “I love it. I know I can climb V10 in a day, but in deep water soloing, I’m climbing V8. That’s a couple grades lower than my max. I’m completely burned out,” said Carrie, “On Ejector Seat, we all fell off the same hold and we all have the same fear. Everyone is dealing with their demons up there. It brings up honest and open conversations, it’s very raw.”

When I first started climbing, there weren’t many women in the sport. The few who climbed at the local gym, seethed with competitiveness – for grades and the attention of men. Encouragement from other women rarely felt genuine. There have been times I

hated a girl for climbing something I couldn’t. Now, when a girl-friend sends something, I’m truly proud of her. Thankfully, I’m no longer threatened by the company of strong, beautiful women. I don’t compare myself or feel less than them. Just richer for knowing them.

That night, we reconvened and cooked dinner, drank wine and listened to Carrie recount her final attempts on Ejector Seat. She didn’t send and she wanted it so badly. In the end, it didn’t matter whether she sent or not. She faced and overcame her fears and she will be back.

In the morning, everyone was hung-over and busy packing. We drank coffee and tea and ate leftovers from the fridge. One by one, the apartment emptied. Olivia and I were the last to leave. En route to the airport, we Googled jellyfish-sting and pee. Turned out, it’s one of the worst things you can do, but it didn’t matter. That week we became sisters. We would do anything for each other and, somehow, I felt a little less alone.

Caroline Treadway is a writer and photographer and this is her first piece for Grippd. To find out more, visit carolinetreadway.com



Katie Bono following
a pitch partway up
the route

British Columbia's Remote Leaning Towers

An excellent adventure with
less-than-excellent weather

Story by Katie Bono

When my friend Michelle Kadatz first told me about the Leaning Towers in the fall of 2013, I initially didn't pay too much attention. As she excitedly told me about a mythical place of leaning granite towers that could only be accessed by a two-day, 42-kilometre bushwhack, I murmured sounds of moderate interest and continued to sport-climb or do whatever it was that seemed more relevant than a place I had never heard of and probably didn't exist.

Throughout the winter and spring, Kadatz continued to talk about the Towers and I continued to murmur noncommittal sounds of interest while mixed-climbing or ice-climbing or doing whatever it was that seemed more relevant than the myth of the Leaning Towers.

Then mid-summer, the hammer fell, in the form of a message I received when I got back from guiding a Denali trip.

"Hey Katie, let's go to the Leaning Towers in mid-August with that time we have blocked off. My friend Hannah Preston wants to go and she crushes the granite," read the message from Kadatz, roughly. I could no longer murmur noncommittally. Fortunately, by this point, I had been convinced both of the existence and of the trip-worthiness of said Towers, although I remained skeptical of the 42 km approach.

As the trip date approached, my planning for the expedition consisted mostly of Googling a few trip reports and finding driving directions to the trailhead. Life logistics had been a bit intensive that summer and I had to prioritize other issues over trip preparedness.

The day of departure arrived and with it the need for grocery shopping. Already pressed for time and not even packed yet, I needed to buy food as quickly as possible. As I raced around the limited selection of the Canmore shop, bemoaning the lack of that mecca of expedition food, Trader Joe's, in Canada, I decided I simply needed to buy food quickly by weight and be done with it. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but I later discovered that just because a kilo of Oreos sounds both tasty and time-efficient on a food-buying spree does not mean it will taste good when it's your main snack food on a 12-day trip.

Kadatz, Preston and I met in the parking lot in Radium Hot Springs to sort gear. For Preston and me, it was our first ever

Bono (L) and Hannah Preston setting up a rappel

Opposite top:
Group selfie on the summit ridge

Opposite bottom:
Michelle Kadatz leading near the top of the route

The next day was an encore of the rain and fog from the previous day, except that this time, the weather didn't clear.



meeting and we were both a bit skeptical about going on a 12-day expedition with someone we had never met. Kadatz is a master of partner-matching and we hit it off immediately.

The following morning, we shouldered our giant packs and headed into the mountains. The plan was to follow a trail for the first 10 km to its end at a hot spring. After that, we would bush-whack up a steep col and spend the night perched on the col. The first day, everything went as planned, except for the rain. It rained most of the day and we knew we were in for some serious weather.

Day two dawned predictably rainy and foggy. We had a short weather window of a few hours and we seized the opportunity to scope our next move to high camp and shuttle a load of gear as far as we could before the weather closed again, this time with lightning and thunder. We were all stoked to find a faint goat trail through the jungle of steep, wet, vegetated slopes that led to our high camp before we had to go through it again with even heavier packs.

The next day was an encore of the rain and fog from the previous day, except that this time, the weather didn't clear. We couldn't route-find in the fog, so instead we spent the day lounging in the tent listening to comedy podcasts and getting antsy and, for Kadatz and Preston, getting hungry. They had adopted the light-and-fast strategy of food-packing and were trying to ration.

Finally, day four dawned slightly less foggy and rainy. We made a break for it, taking advantage of our lightened packs to blitz up



to our high camp and set camp just before the skies opened up again. A short break in the weather that evening allowed us to run back to our gear cache and snag the rest of our gear in preparation to climb the next day, the only forecasted good weather day thus far.

As the sun rose on day five, we made our way toward the east face of Hall Peak, our objective. The previous night we had scoped out possible lines and had chosen a line that looked interesting and logical. Preston drew first lead and the day had begun. The first



few pitches consisted of 5.10-ish climbing in slabby stemming dihedrals while clawing at grass-clogged cracks to find both holds and gear placements. After that, the climbing eased off a bit, averaging around 5.9, as we route-found our way up the face. While some of the pitches had clearly never seen a climber, we found one Leeper hanger at the top of the fifth pitch. At the top of the ninth pitch, we hit a low-angled bowl and sprinted for the summit ridge, gaining the summit with several hours of daylight to spare.

After scrambling to the summit and finding a summit cairn and a water-logged summit register, we started our descent down the North Ridge. The descent was remarkably straightforward and as we touched down back onto the ground and our ropes pulled smoothly, it felt almost too good to be true. It was still light out, we had made it to the top of Hall Peak our first try on our first weather window, with almost no sussing out of the line beforehand and nothing too crazy had happened. We promptly hightailed back to our basecamp before anything could go wrong and before we knew it, we were eating pad Thai in the last few rays of evening light. Excitedly making plans for the next few days despite the unsettled forecast, we dozed off to sleep.

The next morning, we got a satellite phone text from Kadatz's man, Jon. The phone only writes in uppercase, so the text read roughly and ominously along the lines of,

"THE FORECAST IS REALLY BAD. EITHER GET OUT NOW WHILE YOU CAN OR HUNKER DOWN FOR THE LONG HAUL."

Alarmed by the presence of such a dire forecast in so many capital letters and already thrilled by the adventure of the previous day, we sat down to discuss our options. We would have maybe one day out of the next five to go climbing. Although we were all excited by the educational possibilities afforded by my large library of podcasts, we decided that the smart option would be to, in the words of Jon channelled by the sat phone, "GET OUT NOW."

Hiking out was a bit of a suffer-fest, but by now we were pros. We hurried to get to the hot springs in record time, have a bath and then beat our feet again to get to the car in time to get to the pub before the kitchen closed. Settling into our booth at the pub, we made a toast, "No one died!"

The trip was a great success. We made the best of the weather we had and the cards we were dealt. We had a beautiful, amazing day of climbing. Despite the ridiculous nature of the packs, the approach, the weather and the whole trip, no one died, no one epic-ed and good times were had by all. We found out later that our route consisted of several variations from an old aid route from 1975 called, predictably, the East Face of Hall Peak. It went at 5.9 A2 and took two-and-a-half days to climb. We named our route Quarter Life Crisis (due to, surprisingly, some quarter-life crises) and it goes at 5.10.

Katie Bono is an American competitive mixed climber and guide based in the Canadian Rockies. This is her first feature for Grippéd.



Photos Katie Bono

A person is climbing a steep, rocky mountain face. The climber is wearing a blue shirt, dark pants, a white helmet, and a backpack. They are using ropes and carabiners to ascend the rock. The rock face is composed of large, light-colored rock blocks with some darker patches. The climber is positioned in the lower left of the frame, moving upwards.

Preston leading

Opposite: Kadatz on the summit ridge of Hall Peak

The trip was a great success. We made the best of the weather we had and the cards we were dealt. We had a beautiful, amazing day of climbing.



WINTER IN Scotland

Canadians discover the true meaning of traditional mixed climbing

Story by **Michelle Kadatz** Photos by **Paul Bride**

Opposite: **Jon Walsh**
on Mega Route X VI,6
Ben Nevis

"Keep it together,

through the lashing wind. After hours of navigating by headlamp, we had climbed to the top of Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the British Isles. We fuelled for our descent by drinking whatever water that hadn't turned to ice and gnawing on some frozen baked goods. The darkness set-in and became a shield to the terrifying exposure. I had never climbed in the dark before and I was scared to not see past my head-torch on such a big face. Had I seen where I was going, maybe I wouldn't have had the gumption to go there.

In February of 2013, my partner Jon Walsh and I went to Scotland to explore the motherland of "traditional mixed" climbing. During the first week, we joined the British Mountaineering Council's international winter meet. Forty-four climbers from 26 countries paired up with local climbing hosts throughout the week. Following the day's climbing, the evenings were social, providing a chance to tell tales of the day and discuss adventures over drinks and dinner. Everyone was motivated to get up early, drive and hike several hours to go climbing in the fabled conditions that the Scottish winters are known for.

we have a few more hours of game-on, then we can relax," said Ian Parnell

During the meet, 10 new routes were established as well as many impressive repeats. Harsh weather is necessary for perfect climbing conditions, plastering ice and rime along the rock walls. The climbing is done in the purest style with strict ethics. The rock has to be covered in white or it doesn't count. Taking your own protection with you when you climb and taking it out when you leave is essential. I didn't see a bolt the entire trip. Finding gear is often challenging, requiring creativity and skill to clean the iced cracks and hammer whatever protection you might find using hexes, nuts, bulldogs and pins.

My first day of climbing in Scotland, I couldn't see my partner's feet in front of me. With winds over 80 kilometres per-hour and snow blowing every direction, the visibility was limited. We approached



the base of our route and after 10 minutes of racking up, my layers were covered in snow. I was frozen and couldn't believe that people would be outside in this weather, let alone try to climb. It just was too much, we turned around. After a night inside to thaw out and recoup, we set off the next day, walking in the valley base; everything was warm and there was green grass. "This will be nice," I thought to myself.

After about one-and-a-half hours of hiking over the highlands, I asked my partner Will Sim if we were on a glacier, the conditions had changed so rapidly. We broke track up a steep snow slope until we were at the base of a daunting corner with a strip of thin ice on it. The route had recently been established by Nick Bullock, who described it as having, "No footholds, rotten ice and poor protection. The first pitch was the crux, which in similar conditions will stop most parties unless their will is strong."

My next partner, Parnell, had long been dreaming of climbing the Centurion on Ben Nevis. To our luck, it was in full winter condition and with an early start, we set off to climb. The first five pitches of the route were hard and technical. The belays

were painstakingly long. No matter how much chocolate I ate, nothing dulled the misery of being pounded by spindrift and trying not to freeze. My hands were so numb, I nervously double-checked the belay device to make sure I still had the rope. After the crux-pitch, I was tearing up as I came to the belay. Parnell reluctantly asked me if I wanted to go down. Not wanting to disappoint him, I said I was psyched to keep going up.

I knew the higher we climbed, the more committed we would be. "This is what I came here for, the true Scottish winter experience," I told myself. A pitch higher and we stared at an imposing traverse. The anchor seemed a bit sketchy. A combination of old rusty pins and one small nut, did not inspire confidence. As it often goes, there was nothing else for protection. Parnell engaged in hard climbing right off the belay. Twice he fell landing on my leg with his crampons while screaming profanities. "I'll give it one more go," he said and pounded in a small nut, summoned his will and eventually disappeared around the arete. Much to my relief, the holds were good and when my feet blew out from under me, I was left dangling on my tools.

We broke track up a steep snow slope until we were at the base of a daunting corner with a strip of thin ice on it.

Top left: **Jon Walsh** sharpening his tools

Top: **Walsh** leading Mega Route X VI,6 Ben Nevis

Opposite: **Walsh and Michelle Kadatz** making the first ascent of The Shield Indirect VIII,8 a variation to the Shield Direct, Ben Nevis







The next week of the trip, Walsh and I climbed together. He has an eye for lines that are hard with thin ice and he likes to climb “on the edge.” Needless to say, it is always interesting climbing with him. The last few days of our trip, we were able to stay at the hut on Ben Nevis, which was luxurious living for a backcountry hut. We were able to climb some classics, which seemed to suit Walsh’s style. Mega Route X was a thin ice route that had a wild overhanging dagger called Feeding Frenzy. We encountered some unfortunate conditions

After two-and-a-half pitches, the obvious line became harder so we committed to a technical run-out traverse into the Shield. After several moments of desperation, I blew a foothold and took the 10-metre pendulum whipper.

that forced us to rest in Fort Williams for several days, sampling Scotch and local beer. On our last day, we returned to the hut to try a new route that had of a thin seem of ice and neve, beside the Shield Direct. After two-and-a-half pitches, the obvious line became harder so we committed to a technical run-out traverse into the Shield. After several moments of desperation, I blew a foothold and took the 10-metre pendulum whipper. At least it was overhanging, but getting back on the wall was difficult. We managed two more pitches on the Shield before pounding spindrift forced us to rap-pel a couple of pitches before the top.

Scotland is wild, with an endless supply of quality mixed climbing. I went there without expectations and learned more than I ever imagined. My experience in Scotland has challenged and reframed my thoughts on adventure, climbing and developing a strong will.

Opposite top: **Walsh** making the first ascent on the Shield Indirect VIII, 8 Ben Nevis

Opposite bottom: **Walsh** and **Kadatz** on the first ascent of Shield Indirect VIII, 8 Ben Nevis

Above: Traversing a slope on Ben Nevis

Top right: **Walsh** and **Kadatz** leaving the hut at Ben Nevis

Michelle Kadatz is one of Canada's leading female alpine and mixed climbers. She is based in the Rockies.

SPRING ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS

Having the right gear will help your road trip roll smoothly. From mugs to tents, there's no detail too small or too big. Before you hit the road this 2015, be sure you have the gear to meet your needs. Put some love into your vehicle, fresh tires and an oil change will take you a long way. Here is some essential gear that will guarantee a little extra comfort this spring.

The North Face
Blue Kazoo



The North Face

Blue Kazoo \$290-\$340

This is the more heavy-duty three-season bag that's coveted by mountaineers. This mummy bag is filled with water-resistant down for reliable warmth in wet conditions and cold temps to below zero. The cool anti-compression pads equally distribute insulation to prevent cold spots. Planning on an early season road trip where the nights might hit the freezing mark? This is the bag for you.

Patagonia

Crag Daddy Pack \$209

This 45-litre pack opens up duffle-bag style for easy packing and quick access to your gear at the crag. The top flap both secures the main zipper and functions as a rope strap, compressing the bag and securely holding your rope. Two large mesh pockets on either side hold essentials, while the well-padded shoulder straps and hip belt provide ample support when lugging massive trad racks. A solid pack that's more versatile than it first seems: thanks to the large opening, you can easily stow a pair of ice tools in there, too, making this a year-round crag favourite.



Patagonia
Crag Daddy Pack

Hydro Flask
Insulated Water Bottle



Optimus
Elektra FE

Optimus

Elektra FE \$100

The Elektra cook system is one of the most versatile cooking systems we've tested. Combining a Crux Lite stove with a one-litre Terra Weekender Heat Exchanger pot, the system also adds a clip-on windshield to dramatically decrease boil time and gas consumption. An average boil time of three-minute per litre is more than adequate and the clip-on windshield is a nice touch, allowing either open-burner function in calm conditions or effectively shielding the stove when it's windy. A fantastic stove, but perhaps not for the gourmet, as the flame can be hard to control at times.

Hydro Flask

Insulated Water Bottle \$38

The classic wide-mouth water bottle: refined with double wall vacuum insulation and full stainless steel construction. The only bottle we've tested that doesn't freeze shut on freezing days, the Hydro Flask will also keep your drinks piping-hot for around 12 hours, or cold for 24 hours. Compatible with industry-standard wide-mouth accessories such as filters and drinking lids, a stainless steel inner that doesn't retain odours or flavours and a tough, powder-coated outer shell stays in one piece, even after you accidentally drop it 30-metres onto solid ice.



Jetboil
MiniMo Cooking System

Jetboil

MiniMo Cooking System \$150

The MiniMo fixes the ultra-stove's only Achilles heel: simmer mode. In keeping with its Jetboil company name, the MiniMo boils water, fast: 2.5 minutes for a full litre in our testing. Unlike most other boil-fast stoves, the MiniMo can be regulated anywhere from a barely-there-simmer to full-blown jet engine, meaning you can actually use it to cook meals, not just melt snow or boil water. A built-in igniter, insulated pot cozy and clear, slotted lid add versatility to this awesome little stove system. The icing? Everything – including a small 100 g gas can – fit inside the stove for transport.

MEC

Perseus Sleeping Bag

0 C: Men \$155–165, Women \$152–159;

-7 C: Men \$163–173, Women \$164–169

The Perseus has a relaxed mummy shape and quick-drying insulation, which means you can count on it for value and performance, even in damp conditions. Extra features such as the pocket easy-to-identify drawcords make this a handy bag when it's dark. This bag is good to minus-seven. The perfect spring road trip sleeping bag.



MEC
Perseus
Sleeping
Bag



Innate Gear
MC2 Container

Innate Gear

MC2 Container \$22

Combining a stainless-steel bottom with a food-grade silicone lid-cum-bowl, the MC2 Container is a multi-purpose food-transportation device. From rehydrating dried foods, heating up an at-work lunch or just safely storing your leftovers for lunch, this little beauty has it covered. The lid provides a tight, spill-proof fit and thanks to its stacking, flexible construction it pops open into a handy bowl. The stainless steel bottom section won't absorb odours or flavours, and is tough enough to resist the knock of daily climbing life.

Pelican

ProGear 35QT Elite Cooler \$273

Possibly the last cooler you'll ever buy, the 35QT Elite Cooler doesn't just appear burly – it's certified bear resistant by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (yes, testing includes real Grizzly bears). Add to that a lifetime guarantee, commercial-grade fittings and moulded-in tie-down points and you've got a cooler that will happily ride in the back of your truck for years to come. Perfection doesn't come cheap, but we can't think of a better cooler for those road trips to warmer climates.



Pelican
ProGear 35QT Elite Cooler



Stanley
Vacuum Coffee System

Stanley

Vacuum Coffee System \$68

Perfect for coffee-addicts, this pot + brew press + vacuum bottle + cups + coffee grounds storage container is a one-stop system for transporting, brewing, storing and drinking coffee. Everything you need to make two perfect cups of coffee nests together into a compact, durable package that not only transports your drinks, but keeps them hot for a solid 12 hours. With everything snapping together, all you need to add is a small stove and fuel and your travel-ready gourmet-coffee press is ready to go. There is simply nothing else like it.



Big Agnes
Shield

Big Agnes

Shield 2 \$780; Footprint \$91; Accessory Vestibule \$221

The Big Agnes Shield 2 is the first single-wall, two-person tent to use one of the most breathable fabrics on the market. Weighing only three pounds and 15 ounces, the two-person has plenty of room with a storm flap on the door, a nylon floor, taped seams, and a slick pole system with twist clips and sleeves to attach the tent to the frame. Imagine one tent for summer road trips and winter back-country missions. What a wonderful world.



Mountain Hardware
Optic 6

Mountain Hardware

Optic 6 \$450

The Optic 6 is the one of the best tents for long road trips. Made for those who appreciate open space, the Optic 6 is a true six-person sanctuary. It features standing-room interior and opposite doors for a panoramic view. Great for a few people with lots of gear or a family who wants a comfortable tent.—*Rafal Andronowski*

John Furneaux
starting up the
Replicant W15+,
Rockies

Spring Ice Gear

Canada is cold winter, but sometimes it's cold in spring. Ice climbs can hang around well into April in some areas. If you're digging the swings this spring, this gear is for you.



Sterling Rope Fusion Nano IX 9.0 mm \$260

Sterling's venerable 9.2 mm Nano gets a redesign and update for 2015 in the form of the Nano IX. The diameter drops to nine millimetres, but the rope is now triple-certified as a single, half and twin for maximum versatility. Offered only with a dry finish that doesn't seem to soak up any moisture at all, it's a fantastic performing rope in alpine and snow environments with a soft, smooth sheath but a relatively stiff hand. Available in both BiColour and solid-colour (with a middle marker) versions, this is a solid update to a well-established, classic skinny rope.



Trango Raptor \$198

The Raptor penetrates into ice with the authority of a sledgehammer, thanks to substantial pick weights and a refined ice pick that is easy to swing, and easy to clean. The mixed pick is thicker and beefier for dry-tooling abuse, and has a steeper, more aggressive angle for better stability on rock sections. A single-piece moulded-rubber grip, spike with carabiner hole and multiple grip positions round out these tools' features, making them a great choice for ice and mixed cragging as well as more alpine-oriented routes alike. A steal for this price!



Black Diamond Fuel \$306

The latest tool from the maven at BD, the Fuel was designed as a quiver-of-one tool for winter climbing – and it delivers. The rigid, one-piece shaft provides confidence for hard dry-tooling moves; adjustable grip size accommodates different hand and glove sizes; the removable pommel spike can be left on for alpine routes, or removed for hard ice and demanding mixed; the Fusion Ice pick is stable on rock, yet bites into ice on even the coldest Rockies days. A beautifully made tool that functions superbly across all modern winter climbing disciplines.



Grivel Speedy 360 \$119

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Photo: Paul Bride

Joe Kinder tests himself: Flatanger Cave, Norway.
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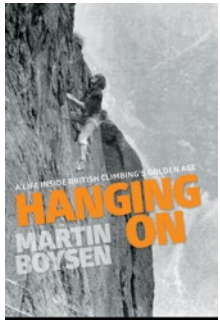
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Hanging On: A Life Inside British Climbing's Golden Age
By Martin Boysen
Vertebrate Publishing, 2014

Smoothly climbing Squamish's Grand Wall with but a rack of small nuts before completing Freeway and Cerberus in impeccable style, Martin Boysen, a retired schoolteacher from Manchester, makes a bit of a stir at the

climbers' campground. He and his equally unprepossessing partner's travels to Squamish, the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and Vedauwoo to climb tough cracks are an epilogue to a life whose arc begins with the first, ineffable contact with rock at an outcrop in southeastern England – forswearing shoes for socks and tying into an offered rope. It's 1952, and the golden age of British rock climbing is about to begin, Martin Boysen to become one of its noted figures.

His generation recasts U.K. climbing as a game played at the highest levels in the Alps, South America, and the Himalayas made accessible to a much broader social base than the private-school world of Mallory and Irvine. Climbing clubs and sponsored exchanges play a far greater role than they do today in the age before you simply got on a plane to climb. Boysen is at the height of his powers in 1976 when he, Joe Brown, Mo Anthoine and Malcolm Howells succeed in establishing the longest and most technically demanding route in the world when they climb the Trango Tower in the Karakoram. For Boysen, it's a return to a route where he narrowly escaped freezing to death when his knee got incongruously stuck in a wide crack high up.

Central to the character that Boysen brings out is an unwillingness to profit or seek fame, or to push things past the point of no return to family and friends. Such details only serve to tell us that Boysen is the arch hardman of the postwar British era that the hoodied denizens at the base of the Chief fail to recognize.—*Tom Valis*



The Tower: A Chronicle of Climbing and Controversy on Cerro Torre
By Kelly Cordes
Patagonia Books, 2014

In 1968, a strong British team made it to the base of the Cerro Torre headwall. They had had pushed a route up the southwest face, trading leads, fixing ropes, but had dropped their bolt kit. They reached

a 12-metre blank section. Ominous plumes of high cirrus came streaming in from the Pacific. It was time to retreat. Ocean-driven, the storm would clamp them in basecamp for 40 nights and destroy their hard won ropes and ice caves. Accepting failure, storied team member Martin Boysen felt as if they had woken from an enchanted dream, a dream which would persist in his memory. "The Cerro Torre will for me always be a symbol of impregnability, desolation and titanic natural forces too great to be diminished by man," he wrote.

A Cerro Torre FA to his credit, alpinist and AAC Journal editor Kelly Cordes has written a full-fledged narrative of this fabled peak, whose hanging summit ice mushrooms and cataclysmically steep faces have only recently been climbed by traditional means. His deeply researched book interleaved three narratives: Cesare Maestri's false ascent in 1959 and his subsequent construction of the Compressor Route, its subsequent "ascent by fair means" and erasure by Hayden Kennedy and Jason Kruk and the evolution of Patagonian climbing from heroic to hard.

As an alpine rock and ice climb, Cerro Torre stands in comparison only to Mount Everest in the world of mountaineering. Every aspect has its associated epics. Cordes brings considerable passion and precision to bear as he unravels the myths only to give you a greater sense of awe of the strength of vision it took to climb this strange and unforgiving peak.—*TV*

continued from page 64

The next day, after hiking 30 minutes each way to the boulder and back three times with pads in the hot desert sun, I arrived warm and ready to go. I set the pads up prepared for any possibility. I protected the upper crux and the top-out because I wasn't falling on the start anymore. I chalked up, felt the dryness in the air, blew the excess chalk off the holds and took a peek at the top of the boulder; that's where I'm going. I set my feet and pulled on. I moved left, bumped, foot up, felt good, right hand stabbed and uh oh. I was on the ground and yes, my ass met rock. I spent the next 10 minutes hobbling around telling myself it was a warm-up, don't get down. Second try and fail. Third try and fail. Fourth try and fail. Three hours later and I was still failing. That was it, that was my last try and I had failed. I was exhausted, frustrated and annoyed. I stacked all six pads and my climbing gear together. In the end I walked away alone, smelly and defeated. I failed. I chewed myself up on the drive for not sending, flying Regan home and spending that extra cash

we did not have to send a boulder. I felt ridiculous, but then realized what failure meant and it wasn't anything negative.

Failure is part of the learning experience of climbing and it is a positive thing. You can take your 20-minute pity party if you have to walk away, but in the end you can't dwell on the negative. The moves, the route, it doesn't define who you are as a person. It gave you just what you were looking for, a challenge. So wipe the tears and thank your lucky stars you got to flail around on that beautiful piece of rock.

Failure is harsh and rewarding and it puts a smile on my face, that's why I play the game. I focus on the positives and it gives me pleasure, makes me better and challenges me physically and emotionally. I always come back stronger.

Josh Muller is one of Canada's strongest climbers. This is the first of his three-part series for 'Notes from the Top.'

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Finding Success in Failure

Lessons from the rock

Story by Josh Muller

The game is rigged. The house always wins. Every once in a while you get a taste of that sweet payout, but the feeling only lasts until your knot is untied. When you look back at the line of clipped draws and shift your gaze to the left and wonder, “What’s that route?”

We are addicted to the game and the chase that comes with it. A big part of the game is failure. Whether or not you have come to grips with your addiction is another matter. There’s no sugar coating such a negative word. Failure is failure; it means not having success. We like to be successful, it’s in the fabric of our beings, so why do we go back for more? Because, what some of us like more than success is challenge and learning. Without failure, you would never change or improve. Failure is how we learn. It’s how we overcame our fear of falling, it’s how we learn better technique and is how we gain muscle memory. It is the challenge that keeps us coming back for more. These things make us better in our sport and often the failure is the fun part; picking apart climbs detail by detail until we get it right.

There are different ways to fail in climbing: a failed attempt at one move, falling before or after the crux, not making the link you hoped for and, worst of all, having to walk away.

That’s the hardest failure to cope with for me. When, after a long-term investment into a route, I have to walk away. It’s hard not to allow failure to eat you up. Many of us have experienced this type of failure, it’s never easy and it’s very hard to see the lesson. The defeated feeling can be hard to shake. Most climbers can come up with endless reasons to justify the failure such as, the conditions were bad, I was distracted, the other guy didn’t brush the holds, I slipped and I didn’t trust my belayer and my lips were chapped. Obviously, these are all valid reasons for not sending your route. Regardless of the excuse you pick and convince yourself to believe, it doesn’t make it any easier to walk away from an emotionally charged situation with no closure.



Right: Josh Muller working the moves on Clockwork Orange V12 Red Rocks, Nev.

I speak from experience. Last December, Regan Kennedy and I were in Las Vegas. I had been working the stand variation to Meadowlark Lemon V13. I sent it with only a few days left in our trip and thought I’d go for the sit variation. I started working the sit and felt very close. It was time to go home, Regan had to go to school. As we pulled into to grab a coffee for the long journey home, Regan said jokingly, “Hey you don’t have school, you could stay.” Boom, my head exploded. To make it even sweeter, Regan had a West-Jet credit. It was a sign, I was for sure going to stay and send. It’s never a simple thing to book online with a credit, so we found ourselves on the phone, in the ghetto of Las Vegas, trying to book Regan’s flight. Yes, it was worth hundreds of dollars to send, yes it was worth driving the whole 24-hour drive home alone to send and yes it was worth doing three trips back and forth with crash pads alone to send (without a spotter). I only needed one more day and I was totally going to send. How could I not? Later that night, I put Regan on a plane home. I sat in the van alone all night thinking to myself how rad it was going to be to send the problem. I had worked so hard on it and had learned all I could, there was only sending left to do.

continued on page 60

Photo Ben Fenton

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